

Message Text

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SUBJ: PORTUGUESE-AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS: MALAWI

REF: DAR 920

1. PORTUGUESE FONMIN MELO ANTUNES' COMMENT (PARA 2, REFTTEL) ON RELATIONS WITH AFRICAN STATES SOUTH OF EQUATOR PROMPTED EMB TO REVIEW WHAT PORTUGAL'S RELATIONS WITH MALAWI ARE.

2. MALAWI GOVT OFFICIALLY REGARDS RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL AS ONLY SUSPENDED, NOT BROKEN, ALTHOUGH IT ACCEPTS POSSIBILITY THAT NEW GOP REGARDS EVENTS OF PAST JULY, WHEN PORTUGAL WITHDREW DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES, AS BREAK.

3. AT TIME OF WITHDRAWAL PORTUGAL DID ASK FRG TO PROTECT INTERESTS AND LATTER AGREED SUBJECT TO MALAWI APPROVAL AND FORMAL WRITTEN AGREEMENT WITH GOP TO PROVIDE FOR, AMONG OTHER THINGS, A LOCAL PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING REP TO HANDLE ADMIN AND CONSULAR MATTERS. GOM GAVE CONSENT BUT GOP HAS NEVER FOLLOWED THROUGH WITH AGREEMENT AND FRG PRESENTLY IN QUANDARY.

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4. MEANWHILE GOP HAS ASSIGNED REPRESENTATIVE WHO IS NOT ACCEPTABLE AS FAR AS FRG EMB IS CONCERNED BUT WHO IS LIVING IN FORMER PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE, HAS PAID OUTSTANDING UTILITY BILLS OUT OF OWN POCKET, PERFORMS CUSTODIAL SERVICES RE VARIOUS GOP PREMISES AND ARCHIVES, AND REPORTEDLY COVERS SOME CONSULAR SERVICES. FRG EMB AT THIS POINT REGARDS STATUS GOM-GOP RELATIONS UNDER PROVISIONS VIENNA CONVENTION AS "WITHDRAWAL OF DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION," I.E. SHORT EVEN OF SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS AND CERTAINLY NOT A BREAK.

5. ONLY PRESENT GOP CAN STATE WITH CERTAINTY WHAT ITS RELATIONS WITH MALAWI ARE. (ITS BLANTYRE REPRESENTATIVE HAS HEARD LITTLE FROM HIS AUTHORITIES AND IS NOT SURE IN HIS OWN MIND.) IF CONVENIENT WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF LISBON WOULD CHECK SITUATION WITH DR JOAO PROENCA WHO WAS LAST PORTUGUESE CHARGE IN MALWI, FRIENDLY AND OPEN WITH AMERICANS WHO HAVE KNOWN HIM, AND ACCORDING OUR LATEST REPORT IS AN AIDE TO THE PRIME MINISTER.
STEVENSON

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